carry water. Pottery, unknown to the eastern groups, is crude everywhere else. There are neither canoes nor dugouts. The Indians make five different types of musical instruments, all winds, which are often heard in festivals.

The difference in physical appearance between the Nambikwara and their eastern, western and southern neighbors—Paressi, Tupi-Kawahib and the tribes of the Guaporé—is striking. (2) And they

2. The anthropological study of the Nambikwara was the object of research of Dr. J.-A. Vellard, who was part of our expedition.

also differ from most of the other tribes of Brazil, whose physical type is generally more massive than theirs. In the case of the Nambikwara, the body is not exceptionally small; but they are slim, and their long hair, sometimes wavy and of more developed pilosity than the indigenous median, their hands and feet of reduced dimensions, their fine lineaments, and above all their faces, of characteristic outline but very purely chiseled, contribute to form a physical type far removed from that encountered most often in South America, but which reminds one persistently of certain types of southern Mexico and Guatemala, and even more of that characterized by the masks with pointed beards of the region of Vera Cruz.

* * * * *

The Nambikwara get up at dawn, stir up the fires, warm themselves as well as they can after the cold of the night, then they eat lightly of the [16] remains of last evening's yucca cakes. A little later the men leave, together or separately, for a hunting expedition. The women remain in the camp where they devote themselves to culinary duties. The first bath is taken when the sun begins to come up. The women and children often bathe together for amusement, and sometimes a fire is lighted before which they crouch to warm themselves on coming out of the water while they playfully exaggerate a natural shivering. Other bathing takes place during the day. The daily occupations vary little. The preparation of food is that which requires the most care and time. Yucca must be ground and pressed, and the pulp dried and cooked. Or else the cumaru nuts (Dipteryx odorata) which add their perfume to most dishes must be shelled and boiled. When the need is felt, women and children go out on foraging expeditions. If the provisions are sufficient, the women spin, crouched

2: Lévi-Strauss E-5 (1938-1939)1948
SP17 Nambicuara SP17

and dots hanging down from the nape of the neck. A similar but shorter headdress may be worn in daily life.

Hair is groomed with a composite comb. It is cut with a shell, either all around the head at the level of the ear lobe, or only across the forehead, the back and sides being allowed to fall loose. Body painting consists mainly of urucú smeared uniformly, but some groups roughly trace black dots and stripes with genipa juice on the chest and legs. Face and body hair is generally pulled out, especially by women; men often have a sparse moustache and beard.

TRANSPORTATION

Canoes are unknown. Small waterways are crossed on a fallen tree; large ones by swimming, sometimes with the help of large floating bundles of buriti palm stems. Babies straddle their mother's hip supported by a large sling of bark or woven cotton.

MANUFACTURES

Spinning.—Women spin cotton with a crude drop spindle made of grass stalk. The whorl is a wild fruit, a potsherd, or a conical piece of sun-dried clay. Cotton thread is rolled in a ball and, like everything else in a *Nambicuara* household, wrapped in leaves. Women and men twist tucum and buriti fibers on their thighs to make string.

Weaving.—Weaving is limited to cotton bands and belts which men make on small, rough looms of the "*Aruaak*" type (pl. 37, *center, right*).

Basketry.—Men make long, open-mouthed, cylindrical baskets using bamboo strips and a hexagonal, open weave. Fire fans are plaited of palm leaves. The *Northern Nambicuara* used palm leaves to weave low square baskets for storing the manioc and maize flour.

Pottery.—Pottery is unknown among the *Eastern Nambicuara*. In other groups, women make coarse pots of varying sizes. They mix the clay with ashes, fire the pot in the open, and wash it while it is still hot in an infusion of resinous bark.

Implements.—Stone ax heads were formerly fixed with wax and strings in the loop of a bent handle. Knives and drills are made of a crude flint chip or piece of iron fastened with wax and thread at the end of a piece of wood or between two pieces of wood, which form the handle. Women hollow small cylindrical mortars in tree trunks by means of fire. Fire is made with a fire drill, crude rubber serving as tinder. The Indians burn almecega (*Tetragastris balsamifera*) resin for light. Knives are thin, sharp-edged pieces of wood.

Weapons.—The *Nambicuara* bow is about 5 to 7 feet (2 m.) long, the section being flat, semicircular, or concave according to the group. The grip is wrapped with cotton. The arrow is released between the thumb and the first finger, the three other fingers being placed on the

3: Lévi-Strauss E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
SP17 Nambicuara SP17

ties down to their smallest details. There is, undoubtedly, a function in chieftainship. This can, however, be reached only through analysis as the underlying principle of the institution. In other words, the differing structure of the digestive organs in man, ox, fish and clam do not point toward different functions of the digestive system. The function is always and everywhere the same, and can be better studied, and more fully understood where it exists under a simple form—for instance, in a mollusc. Similarly, and as Professor Lowie once wrote, if anthropology is to be considered as a scientific study, its subject matter cannot be individual cultures, but culture taken as a whole; the rôle of individual cultures being to offer, according to their own characteristics, special angles from which the basic functions of culture, although universal in application, can be more easily reached.

This will perhaps help us to eliminate preliminary questions which otherwise could have proved very difficult. Anthropologists in South America and elsewhere have been eagerly debating the question of whether these South American tribes—nomadic, relying mostly on collecting and gathering, with little or no agriculture, little or no pottery, and, in some cases, with no dwelling other than crude shelters—should be considered as truly primitive and as having preserved their exceptionally low cultural level through tarriance, or whether they did not previously possess a higher type of social and material organization and have regressed to a pseudo-archaism under unfavorable circumstances. The Nambikuara are one of those tribes which, along with the Siriono, on the other side of the Guaporé valley, the Cayapo, Bororo, Karaja of central Brazil, the so-called *Gé* of Central and Eastern Brazil, and some others, together form a kernel of primitiveness surrounded, in the West, by the higher tribes of the upper Amazon, the Bolivian plain and the Chaco, and from the Oronoco's to the La Plata's estuaries, by a coastal strip inhabited mostly by the Arawak, Carib and Tupi-Guarani linguistic families. An independent linguistic stock divided into several dialects, the Nambikuara seem to display one of the more backward cultures in South America. At least, some of their bands do not build huts and are wholly ignorant of pottery and, even among the others, these two arts are exceedingly poor. There is no weaving, except for the narrow arm and leg bands which are made of cotton; no dress whatsoever, either for the men or for the women; no sleeping contrivances, such as hammocks or platforms; the natives being used to sleeping on the bare ground without the protection of blankets, mats or hides.

The Wakítisu do not
323 make pottery, but they sometimes acquire pots from the Paressí in exchange for game or fish.

HUNTING, FISHING, AND COLLECTING

621 Today, at least, the Wakítisu band is a producing and consuming unit. Whatever a man or his family gathers is shared among the band. This, however, does not mean that the whole band goes out every day or that they keep together while out hunting, fishing, and collecting. Except
594 when the men go hunting such large game as the jaguar, tapir, and peccary, the acquisitive unit is the family. Every morning while Julio's band was camped in Utiarity a family or two could be seen going out, the husband walking in front armed with bow and arrows, the wife following
[482 and carrying a burden basket on her back and a
854] baby strapped on her hip, an older child following
222 her. As they move slowly along they collect fruits, nuts, insects, snakes, ants, lizards, rats,
226 wild honey, and a great variety of grubs or larvae. When they come to a pond they wade around with small baskets in their hands and scoop out small fish. On one of these trips I observed them
[252 catching fish that were only 2 inches in length.
262] These were later thrown on hot coals and eaten
223 without being cleaned. Small birds no larger
222 than a sparrow are shot if the man can get near enough to use his bow and arrow. If they come
[314] to a buriti stalk of the right size they will cut it down, put it into the burden basket, and take it
313 to camp. On their way home they will usually pick up dry firewood. Thus, when a family returns at nightfall the basket will be full of a wide assortment of foods and useful materials.

224 Monkeys, deer, and large birds are generally
[177] stalked by a single hunter, particularly if he has a gun. Julio and Marciano each owned a shotgun and quite often hunted alone. If a man goes out in the morning and runs onto a group of peccaries he will hurry back to camp, and all the men will then go to where the peccaries are feeding. When they hear the peccaries the hunters will form into three files, one heading directly toward the pigs, the other two flanking the game on each side. When near enough the middle file stops and spreads out, the other two files then slowly surround the pigs. As the flanking movement is going on the pigs sometimes move, but the middle group of hunters maintains contact

5 Roquette-Pinto E-4 (no date) 1913 SP17 Nambicuara SP17

cos a dois. As cestas de carga têm grande capacidade e são feitas de taquára. Os seus laços são fixados no fundo e nas paredes lateraes, passando pelas axilas e pelas espaduas de la india portadora.

Os Nhambiquára fazem ceramica de uma pasta grosseira, negra e mal cozida, na qual se acha a arjila misturada á grande porção de cinzas (Fig. 2).

[323]

FIG. 2.—CERAMICA DOS NHAMBIQUÁRA.
[Nambicuara pottery]

Para derrubar as arvores do terreno destinado á cultura, uzam do machado de pedra (diabaze) fixado em um cabo de madeira, por meio de cordeis e breu (Fig. 3). O indio que consegue deitar abaixo certas arvores com este instrumento, recebe como premio uma bella pena de arara ou mutum (*Crax globulosa*), que se destina ao nariz. Esta especie de condecoração conferida por trabalho industrial é tanto, mais notavel quanto, em geral, taes distinçoes, entre os selvagens do Brazil, são reservadas ao merito guerreiro.

Os arcos geralmente muito grandes, muito fortes, de madeira vermelha, são muito bem alizados. A sua secção transversal é semi-cilindrica. Seu comprimento varia, nos que existem na coleção, entre 1 m. 80, e 2 m. 38. Para obter uma flexa de 50 c. entre a corda e o arco de 2 m. 38, em experiencia feita, precizámos uma força de tração correspondente á 60 k. verificados no dinamometro. A corda é de tucum (*Astrocarium tucum*), e tem um diametro de 2 mm.

[313
412]

FIG. 3.—MACHADO DE PEDRA (DIABAZE) PARA DERRUBAR ARVORES.
[stone axe for felling trees]

As flechas destes indios têm aspétos diferentes e pódemser caracterizadas pela fórma das pontas, segundo 5 tipos (Fig. 4).

O primeiro tipo tem a ponta de madeira vermelha, inteiramente liza e cilindrica (Fig. 4, *e*); o segundo se caracteriza por um pequeno aculeo fixado á ponta, dando-lhe a fórma de harpão (Fig. 4, *b*); tem a ponta de taquára em fórma de punhal com cerca de 25 c. de comprimento, as flechas do terceiro tipo (Fig. 4, *af*); as do quarto tipo distinguem-se mui facilmente por ter a ponta achatada, e provida, lateralmente, de 11 pares de farpas. As mais curiosas das flechas dos Nhambiquára são as do quinto tipo (Fig. 4, *cd*). Sua ponta tem farpas fixadas por meio de fios de

8:Vellard--17a D, E-5 (1938) 1939 SP17 Nambicuara SP17
Çabanè

Plate V

278 Preparation of Çabanè curare (Vilhena region)

A. The curare is skimmed during the boiling.

[412] B. Testing of the degree of concentration of the product with the aid of a straw.

[415 824] C. Funnel made of a leaf rolled into a horn and the leaf used to make it.

[415 323] D. A pot of grey clay, badly baked, used to prepare and keep curare (Nhambikwara of the Cabixi River).